

Council Questions – 4 April 2016 (in proper order)

Q	Councillor	Question	Answer by	Answer
1	Cllr Anthony Finn	Could the Leader update Council on the outcomes of his representations to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in relation to the Local Government Finance Settlement?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	I met the Secretary of State for a one-to-one meeting in January to discuss the Local Government finance situation. Following this meeting and representations made through the DCLG's consultation and via a group of Outer London Conservative councils, Barnet was given an additional £2.8m in transitional grant. This will be used to replace some of the money that had to be drawn down from contingencies. The big prize, however, was the announcement that the government will review the needs assessment ahead of the transition to full business rate localisation. This is an opportunity to revise the present formula which is predicated on an outdated notion of how deprivation is distributed across the capital.
2	Cllr Barry Rawlings	Does the Leader feel let down by his government's proposal to cut the funding for Barnet's schools through the national funding formula?	Cllr Reuben Thompstone (Chairman of Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee)	In principle it is right that there is a fair funding formula so that schools and pupils receive support commensurate with their needs. However, as ever, we will be pushing for a good deal for Barnet and will be making representations to the Secretary of State in this regard.
3	Cllr Anthony Finn	With residents' council tax bills not rising for a sixth consecutive year, what is the real terms percentage cut enjoyed by households since 2010?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	Including the Greater London Authority precept, this represents a 15% real terms reduction since 2010.

4	Cllr Arjun Mittra	What impact does the Leader of the Council think Brexit would have on Barnet?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	Potentially there could be minor contractual changes. No one can possibly know the economic effects of either exiting or remaining in a changed EU.
5	Cllr Anthony Finn	What has been the change in recent years with regards to the proportion of residents who feel the council offers good value for money for the tax they pay?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	According to the spring 2015 Residents Perception Survey, just under two thirds (63 per cent) of Barnet residents feel that the council provides value for money for the council tax they pay. This represents an increase of 6 percentage points from spring 2014 and places Barnet 9 percentage points above the London average.
6	Cllr Phil Cohen	For each year of the CSG contract so far: a) how have Capita performed against the core contract savings target? b) what penalty payments have been imposed on Capita for under-performance? c) what additional payments outside the core contract have been made to Capita for work not included in the core contract? d) what additional payments have been made as a result of contract variations?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	<p>a) The savings on the core contract, £69.6 million in total over the ten years, are on track to be achieved. Savings to date, including an estimate to 31 March 2016 are £10.7 million.</p> <p>b) Since contract commencement, Capita have paid £387k for underperformance</p> <p>c) The council has commissioned work outside the core contract up to 31 December 2015 to a value of £26.1m.</p> <p>d) Since contract commencement, contract variation payments have totalled £3.2m. This includes inflation and contract true up post contract commencement.</p>

7	Cllr Anthony Finn	Would the Leader like to comment on recognition from Labour in their budget amendment that rents need to rise?	Cllr Tom Davey (Chairman of Housing Committee)	I am delighted that Barnet Labour see the need to increase rents in order to build more homes.
8	Cllr Alan Schneiderman	Why does the 2016/17 environment commissioning plan set a target for only 35% of residents to be satisfied with repairs to roads and the quality of pavements?	Cllr Dean Cohen (Chairman of Environment Committee)	I agree that 35% seems low and that we should aspire to a higher target. Hence the £50m investment in roads and pavements over five years.
9	Cllr Brian Gordon	Now that a more detailed break-down of GCSE results has been released, could the Committee Chairman tell us how Barnet performed in relation to other authorities in terms of A*-Cs?	Cllr Reuben Thompstone (Chairman of Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee)	On last year's performance Barnet ranked as the 5 th best authority in the country, with 70% of pupils achieving 5 A*-C grades including English and Maths. Barnet was ranked 1 st for pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate of academic subjects.

10	Cllr Geof Cooke	In view of the Leader's answer to the supplementary question to question 48 on 26/01/16, please could he confirm that he is happy for residents living near the Great Northern line in the east of the borough to have fewer stations through which to access the service than those living near Tube lines?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	It is a railway line with four tracks, not a tube line.
11	Cllr Brian Gordon	In Barnet we have a reasonably large number of single-sex schools, be they faith schools or grammars. Within the overall results, how are boys and girls performing respectively at GCSE?	Cllr Reuben Thompstone (Chairman of Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee)	Barnet's boys were ranked 5 th nationally and the borough's girls were ranked 6 th at GCSE.

12	Cllr Jim Tierney	<p>For some years now developers, while failing to include anywhere near the required 40% affordable housing in their planning applications stipulated in our Local Plan, have been signing up to a review mechanism to agree affordable housing provision if there is an uplift in the value of their investment. At an annual house price rise of 7.4% most housing developments will profit accordingly. Could I ask therefore how many developers to date have made follow-up payments for affordable housing provision in accordance with the agreed review mechanism?</p>	Cllr Tom Davey (Chairman of Housing Committee)	<p>The Review Mechanism was introduced in 2012. One Review has been completed and resulted in an additional affordable housing contribution of c£500,000. A Review for the second scheme to have reached the relevant milestone is due to begin shortly.</p>
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13	Cllr Val Duschinsky	I understand an event was recently held to celebrate the launch of the Mayor's Golden Kilometre Challenge. Could Council be given a further update as to the progress of the scheme?	Cllr Helena Hart (Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board)	The scheme, which encourages primary school children to run, skip or walk a kilometre a day as part of their daily activities, is now (literally) up and running. 14 schools have signed up so far, but our ambition is to get every school involved. The challenge is being supported by the Saracens Sport Foundation and England Athletics, among others. Research students from Middlesex University are to conduct a study with two of the schools over the summer term to assess the impact of the scheme on children's health and fitness.
14	Cllr Rebecca Challice	I have heard that recently waiting times for registering deaths has been as much as 14 days and possibly even longer. Someone also suggested that whilst registry offices are open throughout the week, a registrar for deaths is only available once a week. Would the Leader look into extending the availability of registrars as this seems an excessive amount of waiting time, particularly taking into consideration that a number of our residents may wish to	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	<p>The Registrars service offers appointments to register a death 6 days a week, and within 5 working days of them being requested.</p> <p>Currently 10 appointments per day are available for death registration, with 5 at the main Burnt Oak office and 5 at Barnet House. The service currently has a vacancy which will be filled by the end of May which will allow the Burnt Oak office to double its appointments to 10 a day, so there will be 15 a day in total.</p> <p>Members of the Jewish faith do not request an appointment during Shiva, so this can add to the time between a death occurring and the appointment taking place, and means that the proportion of deaths registered within 5 days of a death has always been lower in Barnet than in other areas. Still, the average wait is 7 days or under.</p> <p>The Registrars service has been under particular pressure in the last 18 months due to 2 main factors. It has experienced a significant drop in income from a reduction in citizenship ceremonies and nationality checking, which has meant that staff numbers have had to reduce. At the same time, the closure of Chase Farm Hospital in Enfield led to more babies born in Barnet, and 2,000 more birth registrations annually. The service is looking at ways to improve performance through generating more income, and improving efficiency such as through consolidating the current 3-site operation into one more central location, enabling more resourcing flexibility</p>

		have the registration of death and funeral completed in little over a week after their loved ones death.		
15	Cllr Val Duschinsky	Could the Committee Chairman outline the key changes to the library service proposals following the most recent consultation and further analysis?	Cllr Reuben Thompstone (Chairman of Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee)	Key changes include: a) extending the age range for which children can register to use technology enabled opening of libraries unaccompanied, to include pupils in Year 11 and aged 15. These pupils will require parental consent and confirmation from their school. b) the introduction of live monitoring CCTV during all extended opening hours. c) an increase in the first two years annual grant to Partnership libraries
16	Cllr Alon Orbach	Is the Prime Minister right to be campaigning to keep Britain in the European Union?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	The Prime Minister is right to give the public a vote on the issue – something the last Labour government promised and then refused to deliver when in office.
17	Cllr Val Duschinsky	Transport for London's own figures show that a four-year fares freeze would create a £1.9 billion black hole in its budget. What would be the potential impacts of this?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	This would lead to a decline in the quality of the service as it is starved of investment. There is a balance to be struck between fare levels and capital provision that a freeze would damage.

18	Cllr Alison Moore	What is the council doing to secure sufficient secondary school places meeting community need in the east of the borough?	Cllr Reuben Thompstone (Chairman of Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee)	In recent years, the council has invested to expand The Compton and Christ's College in anticipation of the requirement for additional secondary school places in the east of the borough. In addition the Archer Academy and St Andrew the Greek Apostle free schools have provided an additional 300 year 7 places each year. For September 2016, Ashmole Academy is offering an additional 29 places. The Ark Academy Trust is preparing a planning application to open a new all-through school in the east of the borough that will provide an additional 180 year 7 places by September 2018. Current projections indicate that assuming the Ark Pioneer Academy opens, this will be sufficient to meet need. However, it is a possibility that prior to the Ark opening, temporary bulge classes may be required, this is being kept under review.
19	Cllr Val Duschinsky	What would a potential £1.9bn hole in the Mayoral budget equate to in terms of council tax for a typical household?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	To plug a £1.9bn budgetary hole, a typical household would be required to pay an additional £175 per year. This would be thoroughly undesirable.
20	Cllr Anne Hutton	Why didn't Capita notice that server back-ups were not being completed successfully before the final collapse of the server responsible for taking the Library IT system offline?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	Alerting of the success and failure of the backup service was configured but had not been received by the IT service.

21	Cllr Stephen Sowerby	Does the Leader welcome the apparent break-through in terms of getting the night tube up and running and what benefits does he think the initiative will have for Barnet residents?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	Yes. I am pleased that a start date has been announced for the start of the service. This will be welcome for residents whose journey times to or from central London could be cut by as much as an hour. The night tube is set to boost the London economy by £360m per year.
22	Cllr Barry Rawlings	Is the Leader reviewing his position in light of the programme 'The Estate we are in'?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	No.
23	Cllr Stephen Sowerby	Does the Leader or Committee Chairman think that putting more police on public transport at night is a positive step, particularly allied to the night tube?	Cllr David Longstaff (Chairman of Community Leadership Committee)	<p>Yes. The police have been proactive in identifying the stations where particular crime may increase; accordingly, they have increased the number of officers which seems sensible, appropriate and proportionate.</p> <p>The British Transport Police (BTP) will provide more than 100 officers to patrol the 144 stations that will be open throughout the night each weekend when the Night Tube services begin. More BTP Police Community Support Officers will also be out on the network to assist passengers, and support police officers, as required.</p> <p>There will therefore be an enhanced policing presence during the overnight services.</p>

24	Cllr Phil Cohen	Does the collapse of the Barnet Library IT system, reported in an email to members by Capita on 4 March, constitute a failure of the Capita contract, and if so what penalties will the council impose on Capita?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	Contractually, CSG are obliged to fund all activities necessary to bring the system back into operation, and will therefore be funding these costs, which will not be insignificant.
25	Cllr Stephen Sowerby	Does the Leader agree that TfL should be classed as an essential service, thereby meaning strike ballots will have to pass a higher and more appropriate threshold and protecting Londoners from unnecessary disruption?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	Yes. Transport strikes bring the city to a standstill and have significant repercussions on the ability of residents to conduct their lives and their business. A minority of activists should not be able to hold TfL, the government and Londoners to ransom. The proposal to increase the threshold for strike action will, I'm sure, be welcomed by the vast majority of Londoners – including those in Barnet.

26	Cllr Alan Schneiderman	How many people responding to the library consultation supported a two thirds reduction in the floor space and staffed hours at North Finchley library?	Cllr Reuben Thompstone (Chairman of Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee)	A range of issues to reduce the cost of the library service was explored during the first phase of resident consultation including reducing the size of the footprint of the library area. There was little resident support for many of the potential ways to reduce cost including closing libraries, reducing a library in size (particularly to the proposed minimum of 540 square feet), reducing staffed opening hours. However, there was some support for making better use of space and realising income-raising opportunities. On balance, residents expressed a preference to maintain the same number of library sites, including North Finchley. This led to the revised proposal (first considered by CELS and Council in Autumn 2015) that retains all libraries whilst achieving significant budget savings through balancing a number of factors including releasing space for in-come raising opportunities in library buildings. The issue of size of the retained library area at each site (a minimum of 2,153 square feet at Core Libraries like North Finchley) was not a specific feature of the second phase of consultation although it was raised by residents in some focus groups (see Appendix I of CELS Library report).
27	Cllr Stephen Sowerby	Does the Leader agree that increasing capacity on the Northern Line should be a key priority for the next Mayor of London?	Cllr Dean Cohen (Chairman of Environment Committee)	Yes. Continued investment in London's transport infrastructure is crucial and must be protected. A gimmick like a fare-freeze should not be allowed to derail these planned improvements which will be of benefit to Barnet residents.
28	Cllr Geof Cooke	Is the Leader content that Barnet is among the worst-provided London boroughs for Tube and railway stations (Transport for London and National Rail services) per 100,000 population and that will remain	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	We may be less well provided with stations per capita, but we have an improving Northern Line and two mainlines with the Piccadilly Line to serve our residents.

		the case even after the new Thameslink station opens at Brent Cross South?		
29	Cllr Joan Scannell	Does the Leader think London should have a Mayor who stands up for Barnet residents, and Londoners more generally, or one who stands up for the unions?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	The Mayor is elected by the people, not the unions and should serve in the interests of the former, not the latter.
30	Cllr Barry Rawlings	Is the Leader content with Capita's management of IT in the light of the fiasco in the libraries service?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	Contractually, CSG are obliged to fund all activities necessary to bring the system back into operation, and will therefore be funding these costs, which will not be insignificant. Clearly there is a need for improvement.
31	Cllr Joan Scannell	Do we know the rough cost of a tube strike to the London economy?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	The Federation of Small Businesses has estimated that a strike like the one held on 9 th July 2015 costs the London economy £300m.
32	Cllr Arjun Mittra	Has the Assets, Regeneration and Growth Committee looked at the impact Brexit would have on Barnet's economy? If so what does the Chair of the Committee think?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	The impact of the EU referendum is not something that the ARG Committee has formally considered.

33	Cllr Joan Scannell	What has been the reaction of those residents who have used the pilot of technology enabled opening hours in Edgware Library?	Cllr Reuben Thompstone (Chairman of Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee)	The survey of library users who had registered to use technology-enabled opening at Edgware during the pilot found that 84% of those responding to the survey who had used the service reported that there were benefits to them of having access during the extended opening periods. The majority of the benefits described related to increased flexibility offered by the extended hours. However, others also cited benefits of reduced noise levels, increased opportunity for study and better access to local parking during the extended hours. 90% of users responding to our survey reported that they had not experienced any difficulty using the library during the extended hours. Eight individuals (10%) cited some difficulty (Please see Appendix F paragraph 3.7 for further details of the CELS library report).
34	Cllr Phil Cohen	An East Barnet resident has complained to me that ' It is now impossible to get to speak to anyone at Barnet Council. They have put in an automated telephony system and whatever numbers you press you cannot speak to a human being. I do not know what has happened at Barnet Council. It is an absolutely ridiculous system they have put in place now.' What will you do about the telephony system and is this what is meant in the budget paper	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	<p>Customer satisfaction with the phone is measured and reported monthly, and in February 89% of respondents rated the telephony service as good, using the independent GovMetric system.</p> <p>The Customer Access Strategy, agreed at the December P&R Committee confirms that while moving to more automated systems requires care, they are a key component of delivering an efficient and effective service. Face to face services will be available for those that need it, whilst those customers who can obtain the information they need via the phone or the website are encouraged to do so.</p> <p>We are constantly reviewing the way we provide services and seeking to continuously improve the experience customers receive.</p>

		on page 166 about making savings in the customer services model 'by directing customers away from face to face.'?		
35	Cllr Joan Scannell	Could the Leader please outline the extent of the IT failure that affected the borough's library system?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	<p>On 3 March, the library management system failed, and has been unavailable since.</p> <p>Customers can borrow and return books in libraries. Wifi in libraries has been restored. However, renewals are not currently possible due to inadequate transaction data in the system, and fines are currently being waived. The current library catalogue is unavailable. PC access for Adults is available, but not for children as there is no way of validating parental consent via an online tool.</p> <p>The extended opening hours at Edgware Library are currently suspended as the entry system requires a check with the library management system.</p>
36	Cllr Alan Schneiderman	The latest performance indicators for the third quarter of 2015/16 show that less than a third of residents are satisfied with the borough's parking services. What is being done to improve this unacceptable performance?	Cllr Dean Cohen (Chairman of Environment Committee)	<p>A certain level of resident dissatisfaction with the Parking Service is recognised. Progress has, though, been made in improving satisfaction and, of course, no one who receives a PCN is going to be happy. To address these residual concerns officers have established a Parking Transformation Board to define and deliver improvements to the service. The board will be overseeing a two year programme of improvements and members will be involved with advising on the content and direction of the improvement plans.</p>

37	Cllr Wendy Prentice	Does the Leader welcome the council's new volunteering scheme for staff and will he be encouraging as many people as possible to take part?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	Yes. A high proportion of Barnet's residents volunteer and we're lucky to have 1,400 charities across the borough. Volunteering benefits the volunteers themselves; charities; and local people. As part of our commitment to encourage more residents and businesses to volunteer, the council wants to do its bit to support local charities through this new scheme, which allows staff to take up to 2 days a year to volunteer in the borough. Many Whitehall departments have had such schemes in place for years, and I hope a large number of council staff take up the opportunity.
38	Cllr Anne Hutton	How is the education of those children educated at home monitored?	Cllr Reuben Thompstone (Chairman of Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee)	The Council keeps a register of children that we are aware of as being electively home educated. When they are first registered, the family is contacted and visited within the first couple of months. If the provision appears suitable, subsequent visits are made annually. If there are any concerns about the suitability of the provision, a follow up visit is made. If concerns remain then a referral is made to the Children Missing Education Officer and a School Attendance Order will be issued. Any safeguarding concerns are passed on following the LA safeguarding procedures. The responsibility for the child's education lies with the parent.
39	Cllr Wendy Prentice	For MOPAC's seven key target crimes, what has been the overall increase or decrease in offences in Barnet since the baseline year of 2011/12?	Cllr David Longstaff (Chairman of Community Leadership Committee)	<p>Since the 2011/2012 baseline, Barnet has achieved an overall 17.4% reduction across the MOPAC7. This includes over 1000 fewer burglaries per year (a reduction of over 20%), over 500 fewer robberies and more than 1100 fewer Theft from Motor Vehicle offences.</p> <p>Barnet remains a safer borough when compared to other London Boroughs. It has the 7th lowest rate of total crime per person out of all 32 London boroughs and the 4th lowest rate of violent crime. The overall rate of crime per 1000 population is 24% lower than the London average.</p> <p>The Safer Communities Partnership provided its annual update to the Community Leadership Committee on the 9th March 2016 where further details are available.</p>

40	Cllr Alon Orbach	Does the outcome of the European Union referendum matter to Barnet?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	This is a very important decision for the whole country and it is right that this government has given people a vote.
41	Cllr Wendy Prentice	Does the Leader agree that the example of Barnet shows that you can deliver on plans for an ambitious number of new homes whilst simultaneously protecting the Green Belt?	Cllr Tom Davey (Chairman of Housing Committee)	To date our approach has been to focus on growth on brownfield sites whilst protecting and enhancing the qualities, such as the Green Belt, that are good about living in Barnet. We have delivered nearly 3,500 new homes since 2012 when the Local Plan was adopted, nearly 99% of these have been delivered on brownfield sites.
42	Cllr Barry Rawlings	What plans are there to ensure those requiring meals at home are provided with a proper service and can the Leader guarantee this will not involve food banks?	Cllr Sachin Rajput (Chairman of Adults and Safeguarding Committee)	<p>Between January 2016 and March 2016 all current home meals service users were contacted by social care to agree a suitable alternative arrangement. I can confirm that all service users have an agreed alternative option which will come into effect on 01/04.16. Alternatives chosen include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct arrangements with Sodexo • Jewish Care • Wiltshire Farm Foods • Private arrangements. <p>None of these include foodbanks.</p> <p>The Council has started signposting customers to a range of options available in the community, the list can be found on the Council's website - https://www.barnet.gov.uk/citizen-home/adult-social-care/advice-and-support/Support-with-meals.html. I can confirm that we are not providing any signposting information to food banks.</p>

43	Cllr Bridget Perry	For the last three years for which data is available, how many of Labour's then 16 councils in London met a target of 50% affordable housing?	Cllr Tom Davey (Chairman of Housing Committee)	None. (The best that could be achieved was 35% by Ealing.)
44	Cllr Arjun Mittra	The Deputy Leader of the Council said at the budget setting meeting that "no one uses libraries". Has he ever conducted a visit to a library? If not will he do one?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	Of course the Deputy Leader has visited libraries in the borough.
45	Cllr Bridget Perry	What was the verdict of the Home Builders Federation on a 50% affordable housing target?	Cllr Tom Davey (Chairman of Housing Committee)	<p>They said:</p> <p>"[You] need to realise that 50% of nothing is nothing."</p> <p>"Affordable housing limits have to be realistic. Imposing unrealistic targets will make developments unviable, so preventing sites coming forward and reduce the supply of housing – including affordable ones – still further."</p>

46	Cllr Phil Cohen	Which specific community groups have been approached to manage East Barnet Library under the so-called 'partnership' model, and what have been their responses? How many volunteers have been identified to help run East Barnet Library given it will be unstaffed under this model?	Cllr Reuben Thompstone (Chairman of Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee)	The council has not actively approached groups ahead of the proposals being considered by CELS and Full Council. If approved, an invitation will be issued to all community groups and residents to express an interest. The Committee Report (Appendix G) sets out the process that will be followed in relation to Partnership Libraries. In relation to volunteering, the report also sets out the proposed investment in a Library Community Engagement team
47	Cllr Bridget Perry	Would the Leader detail the impact of the changes to the Fire Service confirmed in the current Mayor of London's recent budget?	Cllr David Longstaff (Chairman of Community Leadership Committee)	LEFPA plans to save £8.1m in 2016/17. The budget confirmed the proposal to remove the 13 fire engines (appliances) that have already been out of service for two years. They have sat as part of strike contingency. Therefore, no units currently in use would be lost. None of the 13 appliances are based in (or near) Barnet, so there is no impact on the borough. Without these 13 appliances in operation response times have remained within the targets of 6 minutes for the first appliance and 8 minutes for the second. If returned to service, average response times across London would increase by just 4 seconds for first appliances and 18 seconds for second appliances. Under these plans there will be no compulsory redundancies for firefighters and, in fact, some of the savings will be reinvested into increasing the number of staff available to crew Fire Rescue units.

48	Cllr Agnes Slocombe	Who is responsible for making sure the green cabinets with all the electrical wires are kept locked? One on Layfield Road NW4 and Vicarage Road NW4 and sometimes the one on Sturgess Avenue NW4 are left open and I would they request that they be locked always. I have children's safety in mind.	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	BT.
49	Cllr Lisa Rutter	Does the Leader agree that any proposals for the future of the NLBP site must avoid over-development and reflect the character and needs of the local area?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	Yes.
50	Cllr Barry Rawlings	Why did the Leader and his Group vote to protect all their special allowances rather than provide more police to protect the residents of Barnet?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	It was interesting to note that the Labour Group did not support Cllr Jack Cohen's budget amendment, which would have cut their allowances.

51	Cllr Lisa Rutter	What percentage of Barnet's primary schools are currently rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted?	Cllr Reuben Thompstone (Chairman of Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee)	92%
52	Cllr Arjun Mittra	What has happened to the plans for a cycle lane from East Finchley to High Barnet, since they were agreed at the Finchley and Golders Green Area Committee? Will they be put in place?	Cllr Dean Cohen (Chairman of Environment Committee)	<p>The Finchley and Golders Green Area Committee considered a report in relation to proposals for wards in that area to be part of a campaign regarding safe space for cycling that the London Cycling Campaign (LCC) had suggested. The report and minutes are at item 7 via this link. http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=712&MId=7986&Ver=4</p> <p>The Committee noted the report but did not endorse any particular proposals, or ask for further work to be undertaken on any specific scheme.</p>
53	Cllr John Marshall	I understand that progress in English and Maths is also measured for all state-funded mainstream schools. Could the Committee Chairman update Council on how progress in these core subjects in Barnet compares to other authorities?	Cllr Reuben Thompstone (Chairman of Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee)	Pupils in Barnet schools make exceptional progress between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4. Barnet is ranked 2nd best local authority for progress in English and 3rd best LA for progress in Maths (out of 152 LAs).

54	Cllr Alan Schneiderman	What percentage of the council's streetscene service are agency staff?	Cllr Dean Cohen (Chairman of Environment Committee)	The overall percentage of agency usage is 19%.
55	Cllr John Marshall	What are the likely impacts of the Chancellor's Budget on the residents of Barnet?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	<p>The details of the Chancellor's budget are still emerging, however the likely impacts are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New Thameslink station at Brent Cross - Further grant reductions (found through Treasury led efficiency reviews) - Pilot approach to 100% retention of business rates with GLA and explore options ahead of full roll-out of reforms - £5m set aside for smaller outer London infrastructure projects - Small business rate relief permanently doubled as well as thresholds for eligibility being widened - All schools expected to become, or be in the process of becoming, academies by 2022 - Funding available for rough sleepers and homelessness - Soft drink levy in 2018/19
56	Cllr Alon Orbach	Has Capita failed any Key Performance Indicators by the recent Barnet Library IT server failures?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	The Key Performance Indicator covers the availability of whole council systems and systems critical to the council's safeguarding duties, rather than those which operate in an individual service. Capita have not failed a KPI but other contractual remedies are in place that allows the council to seek compensation for any costs associated with bringing the system back into operation and losses incurred by the council.
57	Cllr John Marshall	How many affordable homes have been delivered in London under Boris Johnson and how does this compare with under Ken Livingstone?	Cllr Tom Davey (Chairman of Housing Committee)	Boris is on track to have overseen the delivery of 100,000 new affordable homes, 15,000 more than the 85,000 delivered in the years when Ken Livingstone was Mayor.

58	Cllr Barry Rawlings	Having turned down the opportunity for 800 more social homes at less than 50 percent market rent what is his message to the teachers, nurses and social workers who are moving away from Barnet because they cannot afford to live here?	Cllr Tom Davey (Chairman of Housing Committee)	Barnet can be proud of its building programme.
59	Cllr John Marshall	Does the Leader support the Conservative amendment to the Housing Bill that will ensure that two affordable homes will be built for each one sold under Right to Buy, in relation to housing association properties?	Cllr Tom Davey (Chairman of Housing Committee)	This indeed would be a big achievement.
60	Cllr Alan Schneiderman	Has all remedial work required as a result of the 'surface dressing' resurfacing programme now been completed and if not when will it be?	Cllr Dean Cohen (Chairman of Environment Committee)	Joint site visits have now been completed on all wards, many of which were jointly undertaken with local Ward Councillors. A programme of remedial works including further sweeping, reinstatement of roadmarkings and some minor patching is being agreed with the contractor with an anticipated start date of Monday 4 April. It is anticipated that the programme of remedial works for Year 1 schemes will take about 6 weeks to complete.

61	Cllr John Hart	Following the decision at Council in January to support the Clean for the Queen initiative, could the Committee Chairman provide an update as to what events took place in the borough?	Cllr Dean Cohen (Chairman of Environment Committee)	<p>A total of 10 Clean for the Queen events took place with an estimated 120-150 volunteers.</p> <p>The 10 locations are Highlands Gardens, Friary Park, Windsor Open space, Cherry Tree Wood, Childs Hill Park, Dollis Valley Infant School, Hale Ward (Beech Walk and Sunnysdale Gardens), Welsh Harp and Mill Hill Bridleway</p> <p>The events, which were publicised on social media and via the friends of parks groups, were well attended by Councillors, and some local businesses including staff from McDonalds' HQ and John Lewis along with children from Dollis Infant school and All Saints school.</p>
62	Cllr Barry Rawlings	Does the Leader agree with taking money from disabled people by cutting personal independence payments?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	No and there is no such live proposal.
63	Cllr Graham Old	How important does the Committee Chairman think the council's new and enhanced waste and recycling offers for commercial premises and flats can be in increasing recycling in the borough?	Cllr Dean Cohen (Chairman of Environment Committee)	<p>Enhancement of the service offer made to commercial premises to include recycling will be beneficial in terms of increasing the amount of waste recycled and reducing environmental impact, as currently none of the commercial waste collected by the council is collected for recycling. This offer will be important for the delivery of the council's forthcoming Municipal Recycling & Waste Strategy, and will be provided as part of a standalone commercial waste service that will be created within the Street Scene Delivery Unit, with a clear separation between the household and the commercial services.</p> <p>Ongoing work to expand the recycling service offer to flats that do not yet have recycling is a key area of focus, this will be followed by work to rebalance the provision of refuse and recycling bin capacity towards a 50/50 ratio, and setting higher expectations for provision of recycling capacity at new developments. This work will be important in ensuring recycling services are available to all residents and in ensuring that flats can make a better contribution to the borough's overall recycling performance than at present.</p>

64	Cllr Arjun Mittra	Does the Council now agree that Christ College School in Finchley should become co-educational, given this excellent school is now very undersubscribed? Is the council pressing for this?	Cllr Reuben Thompstone (Chairman of Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee)	Christ's College is an Academy and its admission arrangements are a matter for the Academy Trust/Governing Body. The council is not aware that the school is actively considering a change to its admission arrangements at the present time.
65	Cllr Graham Old	How many people have been helped into work by the employment schemes run or supported by the council?	Cllr Dan Thomas (Chairman of Assets, Regeneration & Growth Committee)	<p>1046 people had started working at the end of February 2016 from the current employment schemes run and supported by the councils.</p> <p>This includes the Welfare Reform Task Force, the Burnt Oak Opportunity Support Team, the Motivational and Psychological Support service, the Money Mentors project, the Individual Placement and Support service and the WorkFinder project.</p>
66	Cllr Alan Schneiderman	Does the leader support London becoming a National Park City?	Cllr Dean Cohen (Chairman of Environment Committee)	<p>The Greater London National Park's aspiration is to make London; A city where people and nature are better connected. A city that is rich with wildlife and every child benefits from exploring, playing and learning outdoors. A city where we all enjoy high-quality green spaces, the air is clean to breathe, and green homes are affordable. They are looking to make London a greener, healthier and fairer place to live.</p> <p>In Barnet we are potentially in a strong position to contribute to any regional initiative - we have our own Parks and Open Spaces Strategy coming forward where we set out a series of policies that will bring a better future for the parks and open spaces and ones that are more sustainable both financially and environmentally. The aims of the City National Park do potentially correlate with our strategy.</p> <p>Through the strategy we are also looking to support the GLA's London Green Grid which is aiming to link open spaces across London to provide a coherent plan for their better management and making sure the contribution they make to the quality of life, to the environment and to the economy are maximised.</p>

67	Cllr Graham Old	Would the Leader or Committee Chairman join me in congratulating the Individual Placement and Support (IPS) programme, funded by the council and delivered by London charity Twining Enterprise, on being commended as a Centre for Excellence for mental health services?	Cllr Helena Hart (Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board)	<p>The Individual Placement and Support (IPS) programme is funded by Barnet Council and delivered by London Charity Twining Enterprise, in partnership with Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust. Barnet's IPS service joins just one other Centre for Excellence in the capital and 14 in the whole country. The Centre for Excellence status means Barnet can share its learning with other areas of England.</p> <p>The Centre of Excellence was awarded by The Centre for Mental Health, following a rigorous assessment process which found the programme successfully demonstrated its approach in helping people into work. The service has supported 50 people who receive secondary mental health services into work in the past year.</p>
68	Cllr Arjun Mittra	When does the Council expect the community hub on Tarling Road to be operational?	Cllr Dan Thomas (Chairman of Assets, Regeneration & Growth Committee)	The operation date for the new community hub is dependent on the determination of the planning application which is currently under consideration by the Planning Authority. Assuming a positive decision by the end of March 2016, it is anticipated that the centre will be operational for Spring 2017.
69	Cllr Graham Old	How much in total is set to be invested by the council into the borough's infrastructure over the next four years?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	A total of £565m is set to be invested into the borough's infrastructure over the next four years. This will be used to deliver new homes, new school places, highways improvements and new community and leisure facilities.
70	Cllr Alan Schneiderman	Why has it taken over a year to put a new loading bay in North Finchley High Road - outside No. 770? When will this loading bay finally be in place?	Cllr Dean Cohen (Chairman of Environment Committee)	<p>According to records, the initial request for a loading facility in North Finchley was received last summer and Officers have been in liaison with the requestor about some of the details of the request resulting in a resubmission of the proposal.</p> <p>Officers have considered the resubmission and will seek to progress the agreed proposed layout for introduction later this Spring, subject to all statutory processes being satisfactorily completed.</p>

71	Cllr Arjun Mittra	Does the Council believe the internal space configurations for the Old Barn will be adequate to meet the needs of all those interested in using the space?	Cllr Dan Thomas (Chairman of Assets, Regeneration & Growth Committee)	Yes, the council believes that the space being made available will be adequate to meet a range of requirements and will be a valuable community asset. The development of the proposals have included engagement from potential users of the space and have been shared with members of the wider community for comment prior to the submission of the planning application. In addition, the Council has employed a technical team to design the building ensuring flexible spaces are included that are appropriate for community use type buildings and therefore will be available for multiple uses.
72	Cllr Alan Schneiderman	Labour's budget amendment would have scrapped free parking permits used by Tory councillors. Why do Tory councillors still believe it is right to have these permits at the same time as denying shoppers the opportunity to park for at least 30 minutes free of charge in Barnet's town centres, as local businesses want in order to help promote thriving high streets?	Cllr Dean Cohen (Chairman of Environment Committee)	<p>These issues are not linked. Parking permits are available to all Members, but are only to be used when strictly on council business. Some utilise them, many do not. These permits do not cost the taxpayer anything.</p> <p>The proposal for 30 minutes free parking would, on the other hand, cost in excess of £3m per year. The Labour Group has never identified a means of funding this policy and nor has the case been made that it would actually boost trade. Notably, it did not appear in their budget this year.</p>

73	Cllr Arjun Mittra	Does the Council share my incredulity over the events over the past month on Strawberry Vale? Can Barnet Homes guarantee that in a similar circumstance they would consult residents before deciding to cut off the gas supply?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	<p>The gas supply to cookers and hobs in Strawberry Vale, an estate in East Finchley managed by Peabody Trust, was cut off when it was identified that the supply pipes were unsafe at the start of this year. Peabody initially decided that they were not going to reconnect the supply and offered to provide replacement electric cooking facilities. Following representations from residents, Peabody subsequently have agreed to reconnect the supply in full, and are in the process of doing so, with 51 reconnected to date and the remaining 216 over the next 10 weeks. Peabody have also appointed a dedicated resident liaison officer who is keeping in touch with residents, providing updates about re-connection, and is available to answer residents' questions and arrange for support where it is needed.</p> <p>Barnet Homes have confirmed that whilst there is always a possibility that gas supplies will need to be cut off at short notice where there are safety concerns, that they would always try to minimise the possibility of this happening. In addition, they would expect to keep residents fully informed and consult with them as necessary should the need arise.</p>
74	Cllr Alan Schneiderman	I understand that there may be a new senior management Parking Board. Is this the case and if so what is its remit?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	Apparently so. I look forward to hearing of it success.
75	Cllr Arjun Mittra	Will the Council ensure that the next time they have discussions with TfL over bus services to Finchley Memorial Hospital that they will invite the ward councillors?	Cllr Dean Cohen (Chairman of Environment Committee)	<p>Various parts of the Council and the Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have engaged with Transport for London on the issue of bus services to Finchley Memorial Hospital over the past two years.</p> <p>As a result of this engagement Transport for London have agreed to conduct a demand survey to fully understand travel patterns to the hospital. The CCG is currently undertaking a major project to introduce a range of new services to the Finchley Memorial hospital building. The CCG believes that it will make most sense to conduct this travel survey once the hospital's new services are operating at full capacity. This is not likely to be until summer 2016. When the results of the survey are available the Council will contact Transport for London again to discuss the findings. Ward Members will have an important role to play.</p>

76	Cllr Dr Devra Kay	<p>The lights in committee rooms at Hendon Town Hall are as dim and inadequate as the lights that have been dimmed by 50% in Barnet's streets. It is difficult for both committee members and members of the public to read committee papers causing a real strain on eyesight. In addition, bulbs are not replaced for some time after they no longer function making the situation worse. In other public buildings the attractive older lights are retained while reasonably priced small spotlights are fitted to provide the necessary light. Would the Leader ensure us that something will be done to make committee room lighting fit for purpose.</p>	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	<p>The Facilities Management (FM) team are replacing fused light bulbs to ensure all the bulbs for the fittings light up in Committee rooms. This commenced on 21/3/16, the electrical engineer will then, week commencing 28/3/16, check the lighting levels in the rooms to see if the room lux levels are up to the standards laid down in the CIBSE guidance. Once this is done, the FM team will know whether the lighting needs to be upgraded or not. As per policy agreed at GFC on 21/3/16 any recommendations for change or upgrade will be reported to Group Leaders and Chairman of GFC with the option of a full report coming to GFC if requested.</p>
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77	Cllr Arjun Mittra	Does the Council have plans to commemorate the centenary of the Battle of The Somme and the residents of Barnet who served?	Cllr Richard Cornelius (Leader of the Council)	Perhaps the councillor would develop this idea.
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